

NAI Minority Institution Research Sabbatical

June 30, 2003

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the NASA Astrobiology Institute (NAI) Minority Institution Research Sabbatical. To assess the potential benefits of this opportunity in light of your technical expertise, career goals, and institutional research/teaching environment, let me tell you about the NAI and its vision for the Minority Institution Research Sabbatical.

The NAI, currently, consists of fifteen large interdisciplinary research consortia, the Lead Teams. Lead Teams are selected by competitive peer review following the release of a Cooperative Agreement Notice (CAN) by NASA. Typically, the Lead Teams represent multiple participating academic institutions and/or a broad range of cooperating departments/divisions within one Lead Institution, which is the home of the Principal Investigator. The Institute's distributed and collaborative character is determined by this architecture. The Lead Teams provide scientific breadth, technical excellence, and longevity in student education and training. They also represent a substantial and continuing resource of institutional commitment on the part of the constituent organizations.

The NAI Minority Institution Research Sabbatical provides opportunities for researchers from qualified Minority Institutions to initiate joint undertakings with NAI investigators. We anticipate that these short-term exchanges, by introducing the MI participant and the host NAI Member, will generate new collegial interactions, enlist additional academic institutions in the NAI's participant base, and provide the participant's home institution and students with lasting connections. Our long-range objectives are two-fold. First, to assist in the formation of scientific collaborations which lead to joint research proposals successful in peer review competitions, particularly those that result in the selection of NAI Lead Teams. Second, to extend the national academic underpinning of astrobiology at the collegiate level, educating and training the next generation of astrobiologists.

We look forward to learning about you and your plans, and wish you success in this, and in all, your endeavors.

Cordially,

Karen Bradford
Minority Institution Research Sabbatical Lead
NASA Astrobiology Institute

Enc.(6):

Host Investigator Opportunity List
Application Preparation Guidelines
Identifying Information Sheet (complete and return)
Submission Statement (complete and return)
Candidate's Checklist
Sample Evaluation Sheet

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Application Preparation Guidelines

Research Proposal

The NAI Annual Report(s) is available on-line at <http://nai.arc.nasa.gov>. Call or e-mail Karen Bradford if you require a CD-ROM version. It is essential that you research the projects under the direction of the investigator with whom you wish to undertake your sabbatical. You may apply to two different opportunities at the same time. You should indicate your primary and alternate choice of host sites on your Identifying Information Sheet. Your research proposal must be appropriate to either opportunity, and you are advised to indicate how each would be productive and appropriate. You are also strongly advised to speak with the potential host investigator(s). This effort will contribute to your successful application, and to the most productive matching of interests and capabilities. Note in particular that some opportunities may be flexible in their timeframe, while others indicate preferences or constraints. Final initiation and tenure arrangements will be confirmed with the host investigator following selection. In the event that it is not possible to make an appropriate accommodation for a selected sabbatical within one year from the date the candidate is notified of her/his selection, the selection will be voided. The candidate may re-apply without prejudice.

The research proposal (up to 5 pages) detailing the work to be undertaken during your sabbatical is the central element of your application. The page limit includes figures and appendix material but excludes your reference bibliography. Proposals submitted in fonts smaller than 12 pt Times, or with margins smaller than 2 cm, will not be accepted. Comment, as appropriate, on the particular expertise and skills you will bring to, and gain from, this project. Indicate how this experience will contribute to the initiation, development, and future of astrobiology research, teaching, and facilities undertakings at your institution. Pay particular attention to addressing your role in the sabbatical research and in your institution's vision. Indicate the relevance of your proposed work to the investigator's ongoing project(s) and the integrated overall program of the hosting NAI Lead Team. Describe how you expect this interaction could lead to future collaboration with, and possible funding from, NASA.

Curriculum Vitae

Your curriculum vitae is a required part of your application. It should include, at a minimum: educational history, chronology of professional employment, prior and current research experience, technical capabilities, teaching/training experience and commitments, current research support (include contract and grant activities, provide project title, sponsor, annual value, period of performance, and your role/time commitment) and publications (please list reviewed publications separately from reports, abstracts, and contributed papers/book chapters)

Letters of Reference

Recommendations should be requested, and included, from two individuals who can speak to your research and teaching qualifications. One of the references must be from an authorized representative of your home institution. For example, it may be appropriate to obtain this letter from the chair of your department, dean of your college, or a provost for faculty affairs, research development, etc. This individual will be, for the

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purposes of this application and our interactions with your institution, your Institutional Representative. Please make them aware of all aspects of your candidacy, and ensure that they are willing, and able, to accept this role.

Institutional Qualification and Commitment Letter

The NAI Minority Institution Research Sabbatical is open to faculty at Minority Institutions. In addition to a letter of reference from your Institutional Representative, the same individual must submit, an official letter confirming the institution's qualification for this Program. Applications will be evaluated critically based on the level of commitment expressed by your institution, including (but not limited to) the assignment of resources, supplemental financial support, teaching release time, student research/teaching assistantships, capital development, and curriculum offerings relevant to your role(s) and the benefits that your sabbatical will provide upon your return. This statement is important, and should be both realistic and specific. Representations made will be considered obligations on the part of your institution, should you be selected.

Optional Supporting Materials

You may submit additional materials that will help us learn more about your department or institution, its capabilities and plans. Please provide these in triplicate.

Equal Employment Opportunity

In accordance with Federal statutes and regulations and NASA policies, no person on the grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NASA.

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Identifying Information

Sabbatical Selection:

Please indicate your preference for host site/host investigator. Make your selection from the attached listing of individual investigators at the six NAI Lead Teams currently offering faculty sabbaticals (ASU, CIW, CUB, UOW, UCLA, PSU, MSU).

Primary selection

Lead Team:	
Investigator:	
Preferred Dates:	

Alternate selection (optional)

Lead Team:	
Investigator:	
Preferred Dates:	

Candidate Information:

Name (Last, First):	
Position:	
Department:	
Institution:	
Mailing Address:	
City/State/Zipcode:	
Telephone:	
FAX:	
E-mail:	
Citizenship*:	

*This opportunity is only open to U.S. citizens.

Institutional Representative Information:

Name (Last, First):	
Position:	
Dept./College/School:	
Institution*:	
Minority Inst. Designation: (HBCU, HSI, TCC)	
Mailing Address:	
City/State/Zipcode:	
Telephone:	
FAX:	
E-mail:	

*This opportunity is only open to qualifying Minority Institutions.

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Submission Statement

Your signature below indicates your awareness of, and agreement with, the following statements and conditions:

The NAI Minority Institution Research Sabbatical is only open to U.S. citizens. The candidate's Institution has been fully informed of the requirements of this sabbatical program, and agrees to enable the candidate's participation, if selected. Stipend or salary payments from other federal funding sources, including research grants and contracts, may not be accepted by the successful candidate during their sabbatical term.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

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Candidate's Checklist

Pre-Application Activities:

	Review Host Investigator Opportunity List
	Review NAI Annual Report specific to Host Investigators' current project activities and publications
	Contact Host Investigator (optional, but recommended)
	Identify Institutional Representative (your advocate at your Institution)
	Obtain commitment of support from your Institution
	Request Letters of Reference
	Request Institutional Qualification and Commitment Letter
	Prepare Research Proposal

Your Completed Application:

	Identifying Information Sheet
	Submission Statement
	Research Proposal
	Curriculum vitae
	Letters of Reference
	Institutional Representative
	Other
	Institutional Qualification and Commitment Letter
	Optional Supporting Materials
	Mail Completed Application (original and two copies of all above materials) to:
	Barbara A. Laval IGPP Center for Astrobiology 3845 Slichter Hall/Box 951567 University of California Los Angeles, CA. 90095-1567

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Sample Evaluation Sheet

In the evaluation of scientific merit, the following criteria will be applied:

Please score each statement, using a scale of 1-5, with 5 the highest ranking.

The proposed work is relevant to the field of astrobiology.

This research will advance knowledge and understanding in its discipline.

This research will integrate/bridge knowledge across different disciplines.

The research plan is thoughtful and well-organized. It clearly articulates a hypothesis, an approach, and outcomes.

The research approach suggested is creative and original.

The research integrates well with the interests and facilities of the host investigator.

This collaboration is likely to result in sustained interaction between the candidate and the host laboratory or Lead Team.

Sufficient resources are available at the host laboratory, and substantial progress can be made during the proposed tenure.

The candidate is well-qualified to conduct the project.

45 Points Possible

In the evaluation of Institutional Commitment, the following criteria will be applied:

Please score each statement, using a scale of 1-5, with 5 the highest ranking.

The institution indicates a continuing commitment to developing and sustaining astrobiology research and teaching activities.

The sabbatical experience will contribute to the development of astrobiology research and teaching at the candidate's institution.

The candidate has sufficient and substantial support for continuing the proposed collaboration upon return.

The quality and value of the institutional commitment will contribute to the distributed architecture of the NASA Astrobiology Institute.

Specific plans are described and will be implemented upon the candidate's return.

Opportunities for student involvement are described.

In addition to student training and preparation, the institution is active in public outreach, and has indicated how their participation in this program will be used to educate the public about astrobiology.

35 Points Possible

A further 20 Points will be assigned to the evaluation of the candidate's qualifications, as expressed in the Curriculum Vitae and Letters of Reference.